

are, indeed, almost exactly identical with those directed against African natives to-day. It is complained that, compared with the Dutch, they are self-indulgent and idle; that they want no more than a bare subsistence, and will cease work the moment they obtain it; that, the higher their wages, the more—"so licentious are they " ¹³⁶—they spend upon drink; that high prices, therefore, are not a misfortune, but a blessing, since they compel the wage-earner to be more industrious ; and that high wages are not a blessing, but a misfortune, since they merely conduce to " weekly debauches."

When such doctrines were general, it was natural that the rigours of economic exploitation should be preached as a public duty, and, with a few exceptions, the writers of the period differed only as to the methods by which severity could most advantageously be organized. Pollexfen and Walter Harris thought that salvation might be found by reducing the number of days kept as holidays. Bishop Berkeley, with the conditions of Ireland before his eyes, suggested that " sturdy beggars should . . . be seized and made slaves to the public for a certain term of years."

Thomas Alcock, who was shocked at the workman's taste for snuff, tea and ribbons, proposed the revival of sumptuary legislation.¹ The writers who advanced

schemes for reformed workhouses, which should be places at once of punishment and of training, were innumerable. All were agreed that, on moral no less than on economic grounds, it was vital that wages should be reduced. The doctrine afterwards expressed by Arthur Young, when he wrote, " every one but an idiot knows that the lower classes must be kept poor, or they will never be industrious," ^m was the tritest commonplace of Restoration economists. It was not argued ; it was accepted as self-evident.

When philanthropists were inquiring whether it might not be desirable to^{fc} re-establish slavery, it was